

Regular Meeting

Agenda Item #	4
Meeting Date	September 27, 2004
Prepared By	Suzanne Ludlow, Community and Government Liaison
Approved By	Barbara B. Matthews City Manager

Discussion Item	Resolution Concerning Alignment of the Purple Line
Background	<p>On September 7, City and Park and Planning staff presented an update on the status of planning for the Purple Line or Bi-County Transitway. Staff was asked to return on September 27 with a draft resolution concerning alignment options for the Purple Line. Once adopted, the resolution would be transmitted to the Montgomery County Planning Board for their consideration on September 30 and to the Montgomery County Council for their consideration on October 4 and 5.</p> <p>The draft resolution is attached. As recommended at the September 7 worksession, it does not choose between the Wayne Avenue or Sligo Avenue routes, but it does note that, all things being equal, a route that takes fewer homes is preferable. Last week, Mayor Porter contacted staff to recommend that the resolution also express support for light rail over bus rapid transit. The draft resolution includes that provision for Council consideration.</p> <p>Although it was not raised at the September 7 worksession, staff has included a recommendation that the Montgomery and Prince George's County Councils direct their respective Planning Boards to begin master plan updates for the transit route(s). This allows for continued momentum on the Purple Line, but, more importantly, allows for organized community outreach and participation in the location of the route and possible stops as well as the appropriate land uses along the route.</p> <p>Also, since the September 7 worksession discussion, City staff recommended an additional possible stop on the Wayne Avenue route near the new Silver Spring developments on Fenton Street. Such a stop would allow local residents to more conveniently shop at the new stores and go to the movie theaters. This suggestion has been well-received by both County and State transportation planners and may be added to the recommendations made by Park and Planning staff to the Planning Board.</p> <p>Background information provided for the September 7 worksession is attached.</p>
Policy	The Council takes positions on plans that impact the City of Takoma Park.
Fiscal Impact	Although costly to build, a well-planned transit system with stations in appropriate locations are critical to the livability and economic health of Takoma Park and the region.
Attachments	Background information from September 7 worksession; past Council resolutions.
Recommendation	Approve resolution.
Special Consideration	

Introduced By:

RESOLUTION #2004-

**Resolution Providing Additional Comments on Route and Stop Locations
Near Takoma Park for the Bi-County Transitway (Purple Line)**

WHEREAS, the City of Takoma Park has consistently supported increased mass transit service for the Takoma Park community and has endorsed a bi-county light rail transit system for several years as evidenced by City Council Resolutions 2000-38, 2003-4, and 2003-53; and

WHEREAS, if properly designed, the Bi-County Transitway (Purple Line) will promote the revitalization of the business and residential communities through which it passes, will help address traffic congestion in many of the most densely populated communities in Maryland, and will provide much improved access for lower-income residents, college students and others who have few alternative forms of transportation; and

WHEREAS, the Takoma Park City Council specifically supports attractive, well-designed permanent transit stations in the Takoma/Langley Crossroads and Long Branch areas to serve area residents and assist in revitalization efforts; and

WHEREAS, the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) is researching route and mode options for the Bi-County Transitway in order to identify the alternatives to be retained for detailed study this coming winter; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County planning staff have been directed to identify light rail transit routes through Montgomery County which the Montgomery County Council may recommend to MTA to include in its Alternatives Retained for Detailed Study Technical Report; and

WHEREAS, two light rail routes east of the Silver Spring Transit Center, with stops in the Long Branch area and at the Takoma/Langley Crossroads, are being studied by MTA and Montgomery County planners:

- *Sligo Avenue Route.* From the Silver Spring Transit Station, east on Sligo Avenue (with a possible stop at Chesapeake Avenue), north on Piney Branch Road (with a possible stop at Dale Drive), north to a Long Branch station near Flower Avenue, north to University Boulevard
- *Wayne Avenue Route.* From the Silver Spring Transit Station, northeast on Wayne Avenue (with possible stops at Fenton Street and near Sligo Creek), underground after Manchester Road to Arliss Street to a Long Branch station, north along Piney Branch Road to University Blvd

either route would turn southwest onto University Boulevard (with possible stops at Piney Branch and at Carroll Avenue) to a station at Takoma/Langley Crossroads and then continue west on University Boulevard into Prince George's County; and,

WHEREAS, either route will serve the Takoma Park and Long Branch communities; and

WHEREAS, while both routes could accommodate either a light rail or bus rapid transit vehicle, light rail is a preferred mode due to its greater economic development potential (installation of fixed rail assures investors of the permanence of transit service) and to its potential inter-connectivity and shared efficiencies with the District of Columbia's light rail system under development, for which a Georgia Avenue line is proposed to extend to the Silver Spring Transit Center; and

WHEREAS, as further study is done on the routes and possible station locations, priority should be given to routes that minimize the taking of residential buildings and best serve densely populated communities and area commercial districts; and

WHEREAS, master plan amendments are required for the Montgomery and Prince George's County communities along the bi-county transit route east of the Silver Spring Transit Center because neither the transit route nor land use implications of the transit route are detailed in current master plans; and

WHEREAS, a master plan process will allow thorough study and community outreach and participation regarding routes, stops and land uses near those routes and stops; and

WHEREAS, close coordination is needed between Montgomery and Prince George's Counties concerning planning for the Takoma/Langley Crossroads station and surrounding land uses on both sides of the county line.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Takoma Park City Council :

- 1. Supports continued study of the Sligo Avenue and Wayne Avenue routes for a bi-county transit system.**
- 2. Does not support route options without stations at both Long Branch and Takoma/Langley Crossroads.**
- 3. Urges, when choices between routes are possible, that priority be given to routes that minimize the taking of residential buildings and best serve densely populated communities and area commercial districts.**
- 4. Recommends a light rail system, rather than bus rapid transit, because of its greater benefits in the areas of economic development, inter-connectivity and operating efficiencies.**

5. **Requests that the Montgomery County Council and the Prince George's County Council direct their respective Planning Boards to open the master plans along the proposed route(s) of the bi-county transit line so that thorough study of the routes, stops and land uses can be made through a process of significant community outreach and participation.**

ADOPTED THIS ____ DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2004

ATTEST:

Catherine E. Waters, CMC
City Clerk/Treasurer